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Some Suggestions for Teachers of Indian Children for Use in Yuma County School District #27

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SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF INDIAN CHILDREN FOR USE IN YUMA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #27

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INTRODUCTION

In 1959 the Bureau of Indian Affairs closed the Colorado River Indian Day School, and the Indian students who attended that school were taken into the Parker Public Schools. Since many of the new teachers in that system have had little or no contact with Indians, there is a need for a guide that would give those teachers some insight into and understanding of the Indian student.

It is recognized by the educators of Arizona that the Indian people of the state are in a transitional stage. They are torn between their own ancient standards and those which are urged upon them by non-Indians. An appreciable number of Indian children are so confused by the conflicting precepts of their elders and their non-Indian models that they tend, in effect, to reject the whole problem of acculturation as meaningless.

The teacher, who attempts to implant his own notions of success, tends to make the student dissatisfied with every element of his Indian way of life without offering a substitute that he can achieve, tends to build a gulf between the student and his people, and leaves him in some no-man's land, neither Indian or non-Indian.

The contents of this paper should in some small way

help those teachers toward a better understanding of the Indian student, his background, needs, and interests.

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CHAPTER I

BRIEF HISTORY OF INDIAN EDUCATION

Historically there have been three basic types of schools enrolling Indian children: (1) Mission Schools, (2) Federal or Bureau of Indian Affairs Schools, and (3) Public Schools.[1]

Mission Schools

The first Indian mission school was established in 1568 in Havana, Cuba by the Jesuit Fathers for the Florida Indians.[2] Since that date, nearly four hundred years ago, mission schools have been in operation. The objectives of these schools were two-fold: to Christianize and civilize the Indian.

The efforts of the churches and missionaries resulted in the appropriation by Congress of federal money to help operate these schools. The first appropriation was in 1819 for $10,000.[3]

The philosophy of separation of church and state finally dealt a death blow to federal support of mission education. The act of March 2, 1917, made it illegal to use federal funds for instruction in church supported schools.[4]

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[1]Robert Roessel, Handbook for Indian Education(Los Angeles: Amerindian Publishing Company, 1960) p.4.

[2]U.S. Department of Interior, Statistics Concerning Indian Education, Fiscal Year 1959 (Washington, D.C.) p.1.

[3]Roessel, op. cit., p.4.

[4]Ibid., p.4.

The cutting off of federal funds to mission education did not, however, mean the end of the mission schools. In the fiscal year 1963, almost 10,000 Indian students attended mission schools in the United States.[5] In Arizona more than 2,400 Indian students attended mission schools.[6] The churches entirely support the mission schools.

Mission education contributed at least two ideas which have played an important part in Indian education: first, the concept that education was a tool to civilize the Indian and second, the boarding school idea.[7]

One must realize, when summarizing the role of mission education, that these people were the first to concern themselves with the education of the Indian. A large number of Indian youth still obtain their education through mission schools.

Federal Schools

Many of the treaties between the United States and the Indian tribes provided for the establishment of schools for the education of the Indian children. The first federal school for Indians was a boarding school in Yakima, Washington in 1860.[8]

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[5]U.S. Department of Interior, Statistics Concerning Indian Education, Fiscal Year 1963 (Washington, D.C.)p. 9.

[6]Ibid., pp. 10-12.

[7]Interview with Leo Witzleben, Director of Education, Colorado River Indian Tribes, April 14, 1964.

[8]Ibid.

The early federal schools were established along the same lines as were the mission schools. The boarding school was the preferred type. This idea was introduced by Reverend Eleazer Wheelock, who believed that if the Indian children could be removed from the language and habits of the parents, the process of civilization and acculturation could be speeded up.[9] Most teachers working with Indian children will agree that in some cases it is all well and good to place a child in a boarding school if the child is able to stay until his formal education is complete. The problem is that the children leave the hogan for boarding school, spend nine months in a clean environment, have three good meals a day and proper medical care, then return to the hogan for the summer months. What has been gained?

The Meriam Survey of 1929 introduced a new point of view concerning Indian education. This report was prompted by increasing criticism of the federal schools and the manner in which they were operated. This report was highly critical of the boarding school which, it contended, destroyed home life and family security.[10]

As a result of this report, many changes in methods, objectives and approaches were put into effect. Instead of

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[9] Roessel, op. cit., p. 4.

[10] Ibid., p. 6.

boarding schools, day schools were encouraged, better teachers were employed, the standards were raised and the Indian youth were encouraged to keep alive and retain pride in their culture. Another recommendation was that the importance of public schools in the education of Indians be increased.[11]

In fiscal year 1963, the Bureau of Indian Affairs operated 264 schools with an enrollment of 43,435 Indian children and 20 dormitories for 4,082 children attending public schools.[12]

The primary objective of federal schools still in operation for Indian children is to prepare them for successful living. These children in the federal schools develop basic academic skills along with the other necessary learnings that will provide a program that meets the standards required in the States in which they operate, and all secondary schools are accredited so that the graduates may enter college on the same basis as public high school graduates.[13]

Public Schools

In 1890, the first payment of tuition to a public school was made by the United States Congress.[14] In 1900, official

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[11] Ibid., p. 6.

[12] Statistics Concerning Indian Education, op. cit., p. 1.

[13] Ibid., pp. 1-2.

[14] Roessel, op. cit., p. 7.

reports stated that there were 264 Indians enrolled in the public schools.[15] In 1963 there were 72,159 Indians of school age in the public schools.[16]

The disadvantage in the growth of numbers of Indians in the public schools is that most of them live on tax-exempt reservations. This tends to create a financial burden for the local districts. Yuma County School District # 27 is a good example. The district is about 480 square miles, and the Colorado River Indian Reservation makes up about 460 square miles of the district. It is apparent that most of the district produces no tax income for the schools.

The Johnson-O'Mally Act, which became law in 1934,[17] authorized the Secretary of Interior to enter into contracts with States for the education of Indians and to permit the use of federal school buildings and equipment by the local school boards. Yuma County School District # 27 has two such buildings, the one at Poston, on the reservation and the primary school in Parker, Arizona. These two buildings were built and equipped by the federal government and turned over to the school district.

Under Public Law 874, as amended in 1958, a new federal

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[15] Ibid., p. 7.

[16] Statistics Concerning Indian Education, op. cit., p. 10.

[17] Ibid., p. 3.

aid was made available to eligible school districts educating Indian children. This aid is available to meet partial costs of normal school operation.[18]

The policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, urging the education of more Indian students in the public schools, appears to be in keeping with the sentiments of many Indian leaders who are actively supporting public school education.[19]

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[18] Ibid., p.3.

[19] Roessel, op. cit., p. 8.

CHAPTER II

CULTURAL PROBLEMS IN TEACHING INDIAN STUDENTS

Although the Indian tribes of Arizona vary tremendously, there are some common elements that allow one to speak of Indian children as a group. Granting that each tribe may have a different language and a somewhat different culture, most tribes attempt to perpetuate their culture and resist attempts at acculturation.[1]

One must realize that the Indian did not, as other minority groups did, come to America to find a new way of life, to change, to find happiness and escape problems he faced. He was already here, quite happy with his way of life, and wanted to continue as he was. He was engulfed by non-Indians and was usually quite resentful about the situation.[2]

This engulfment and ill treatment on the part of the non-Indian has resulted in the Indian's retaining his culture for generations after other sub-cultural groups have become acculturated. Yet, if the Indians are to be educated successfully, certain aspects of their culture must be changed.

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[1]Louis C. Bernardoni, "Cultural Conflicts in Teaching Indian Children", (Arizona Department of Public Instruction, Bureau of Indian Education, Sharing Ideas, Vol. 3, No. 2.) mimeographed.,p. 1.

[2]Ibid.,p. 1.

Teachers of Indian children should be aware of the process of acculturation and the problems it presents if they are to be successful.[3]

Roessel's List

Roessel[4] has listed some of the distinct differences between the Indian's culture and that of the dominant non-Indian society. The following statements are generalizations and therefore are subject to exceptions.

Non-Indian Way of Life

Future Orientated

The non-Indian American is rarely satisfied with the present. He is constantly looking into the future. He feels that tomorrow will be brighter. His children will have an easier life if he plans for their future now.

Time Consciousness

Time effects the behavior of everyone in the Western culture. Time causes one to be oriented toward calenders, dates, the cause of history, time tables, clocks, races against time, etc. A man once pointed out that many cultures worshipped certain gods publicly and other gods privately. In

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[3] Ibid., p. 1.

[4] Roessel, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

the American culture, he pointed out, many people avow Christianity and publicly worship Jehovah, whereas an even larger portion of the population worships the pagan god, time.

Saving

The non-Indian middle-class American saves today so that he can live better and enjoy tomorrow. This particular concept can be traced to our ancestors. Food supplies were rationed in order that they might survive. This has evolved into saving money for a rainy day.

Emphasis on Youth

Today's non-Indian society places great importance on youth. Up until a few years ago very little consideration was given to age. The older poeple stayed in Europe during the great migrations to America. Therefore, who should make the judgements and decisions necessary for survival? The people present and those effected by the decisions have the burden. Again, we do not find youth, in Europe, with the same status as in America.

Competition

Competition is essential if the individual person is the mainstay of his own survival. When an individual is surrounded by the enemy, his rising vigorously to answer the competition is an absolute necessity for him to survive.

Conquest over Nature

The non-Indian society attempts to control the physical world, to assert mastery over it.

Indian Way of Life

Present Orientated

The Indian lives in the present, living only for today, not for tomorrow. He is orientated to the present, and for the most part, lives by the maxim of "now."

The Mohave will, like most southwest Indians, spend all of the money he has at the store or tavern. For him, money's essential value seems to lie in its conversion into pleasure and into the satisfaction of immediate needs. One hears the statement, "All we want is enough to eat for ourselves and our families." What is not said but is often implied by context or in other ways is that life is so dangerous and terrible and so many things can happen to people, that anyone is foolish to ask for more than immediate security. Hence the predominant drive is for moderate material well-being.[5]

This particular cultural factor is not prevelant in school to such an extent that the teacher will be able to detect it as

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[5]Mamie Sizemore, The Arizona Indian Child Goes To School, (Arizona Department of Public Instruction, Bureau of Indian Education, Phoenix, Arizona) p. 31, mimeographed.

a hindrance to education. The problem is being resolved by the members of the tribe and the parents, gradually year by year. They have found that the non-Indian way of planning for the future is a necessary value that they must embrace in order to compete.

Education is one of the tools that helps the Indian plan for the future. As the teacher encourages the Indian students to continue their education, whether it is completing high school or going on to college or trade school, he will find that this value will, in time, disappear and cease to be a problem.

Lack of Time and Space Consciousness

The Indian concepts of space and time are hopelessly confusing from the point of view of members of the dominant society. People familiar with Indian country know an Indian mile may mean a mile, five hundred yards, or five miles.

Indians, for the most part, have no idea of the meaning of time; "pretty soon" may mean in ten minutes or ten hours. In many places the sun has been the Indian alarm clock, and the seasons furnished a calendar of sorts, which dictated when to plant crops and when to hunt.

Modern day Indians are discovering the importance of "clock time" in getting along in life away from and on the reservation. If school is important to an Indian student and

he cannot depend on "sun time", he will often arrive an hour early. From the time the Indian comes in contact for any period of time with non-Indians, all this changes.

The small Indian child entering school is expected to be there at a certain hour in the morning, the bus will pick him up at a certain time, his school day is regulated by a bell geared to a clock, he returns home at a set time each day. He is judged not "socially acceptable" and is a poor citizen if he is tardy or absent without an acceptable excuse.

A big difficulty in running a school where many Indian children are enrolled is the fact that many of the families do not have clocks so they are not able to coordinate the rising and feeding of the children with the arrival of the school bus which is to take them to school. It would then become clear that one of the first things which must happen to Indian children, who are expected to adjust to school life, is to become orientated to the importance of our clockwork civilization. Emphasis must be placed on the importance of time in non-Indian culture, and this should be brought to the children in actual lifelike classroom activities. Early in his school career the child should be taught to tell time.

Making the child time-conscious is easier than doing the same for his parents. It would be interesting to see what could be accomplished by a dozen inexpensive clocks, in Indian homes,

to promote the regularity which educators consider important.

Giving

The Indians are not concerned with saving. After all, the air and land were free; for centuries food could not be saved because it would spoil--there was no need to save. The respected Indian is not the one who has large savings, but rather the one who gives generously. The value is placed on giving while the person who tries to accumulate goods is often feared.

Giving is related to the Indian concept of present-orientated. They both fall in about the same general pattern. This particular concept will not interfere with the Indian child's learning in school. If it did, however, it would be one of the strongest values to overcome. The Indian is exposed from the beginning to the process of giving. The family shares the food. Clothing is handed down from person to person and family to family. If they do not have clothes, the welfare worker will supply their needs. If they do not have food, the school will feed them or they will receive government or county commodities. They are on the receiving end of giving for the greater part of their lives.

Respect for Age

With the Indian, respect increases with age, and the tried and trusted leaders are usually the older people. Youth is

often a handicap, with young educated Indian leaders frequently complaining that they are not given the position of leadership that they feel they are qualified to hold.

There is very little that the school can do to overcome this value. It seems to be more a problem of time before the young people can take their place in the tribe.

Cooperation

Indians place a value on working together, sharing and cooperating. Failure to reach selected objectives is felt to result from failure to cooperate. For example, if a question were to be asked of a Papago child and he answered, "I don't know", according to home training, other children in the room should not give the correct answer for fear of shaming the first child.

The Indians of the southwest are notably cooperative. Consequently if a teacher, who has been accustomed to assuming that children are competitive, tries to appeal to this kind of motivation by using spelling contests, or by encouraging children to call attention to the mistakes of other children, the teacher may be perplexed to find that such teaching methods do not work very well. The Indian children may not want to parade their knowledge before others or try to appear better than their peers.

The accidental or purposeful singling-out of a person in front of a number of onlookers is likely to cause deep embar-

rassment. Embarrassment in public is one of the greatest causes of shame in Indian children.

Teachers will find it particularly disadvantageous to make comparisons between children, such as pointing out that the work of one child is better than that of another, or is the best. Such a procedure leads to resentment never to emulation. If a teacher has a personal comment to make to an Indian child, it is better to make it when he is alone with that child.

The teacher will discover how to correct mistakes and to praise Indian children without making the children "lose face" only as he learns more about the student's culture and finds out how his people do things and how they think.

Harmony with Nature

The Indian believes in living in harmony with nature. He accepts the world and does not try to change it. This is again another value that will not be found in our tribe or in our school. The Mohave have learned that in order to get along in the non-Indian culture you must manipulate your environment. This is true in all cases where the basis of the economy is agriculture.

Bernardoni's List

Bernardoni[6] lists the following as some of the cultural conflicts that must be removed if the Indian student is to

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[6]Bernardoni, op. cit., p. 2.

succeed in school.

Indian Cultural Values	Values Needed in School
1. Co-operation	1. Competition
2. Time not important	2. Time consciousness
3. Docileness	3. Agressiveness
4. Live day by day	4. Live for the future
5. Follow tradition	5. Question tradition
6. Live with nature	6. Manipulate environment
7. Live like others	7. Get ahead of others

Many teachers who are not familiar with the cultural values of the Indian child insist that the child exhibit unfamiliar value judgements that contribute to success in school. This is frustrating to the Indian child since he cannot immediately assume these values even if he could identify them. These are subtle values that must be built over the years.[7]

An example of the preceeding is the teacher who on an occasion teaches subject matter that may conflict with the parents' beliefs. This might include some of the following:

1. Bathe every day.
2. Go to the doctor when sick, instead of a medicine man.
3. Watch out for germs.

Scarcity of water on the reservation many times places a premium on cleanliness--children may come to school dirty.

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[7]Ibid., p. 2.

"Cleanliness is an easy virtue where there is running water, but where every drop must be hauled a great distance it is an expensive luxury!"[8]

The priest or clergyman points to the miracles of healing through faith in God, and the doctor insists that sickness is a matter of hygiene and germs to be cured through hospitalization and wonder drugs. One small Indian boy told his teacher that all he had heard about since he had been in school was Jesus and germs, and he had yet to see either of them.

> The exposure to values that contradict those of his parents places the Indian child in conflict and he may reject teachings offered him. On the other hand, conflict is necessary before acculturation or acceptance of these values can be affected.[9]

If the teacher is to be an instrument of acculturation, he must be aware of his role and approach the problem in the most effective manner he can find.

Theoretical Approaches to Acculturation

The following are some theoretical approaches that might be used by the teachers to effect the acculturation needed for success in school. The teacher should:

1. Acquaint himself with the culture of the Indian children in his class. This will help him to understand the children

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[8]Sizemore, op. cit., p. 31.

[9]Bernardoni, op. cit., p. 2.

better, help in establishing rapport, and isolate conflicts in values of the two cultures.[10]

2. Gain the respect and affection of his students before any attempts are made to investigate the possible conflicts in culture. The teacher cannot be an effective instrument in acculturation until he gains the confidence and affection of the children.[11]
3. Make the room attractive with something Indian, as pictures, pottery, baskets or other things of interest.[12]
4. Display reservation maps.
5. Use show and tell periods.
6. Tell or read Indian legends; dramatize these.[13]
7. Discuss the similarities between the two cultures. This should give the children some basis of security.[14]
8. Allow the students in home economics to use and demonstrate their methods of cooking, sewing, bead weaving, etc.[15]

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[10]Ibid., p. 3.

[11]Ibid., p. 3.

[12]Interview with Marie Butler, 15 years of teaching experience in Indian Schools, January 16, 1964.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Bernardoni, op. cit., p. 3.

[15]Interview with Vesta Tyson, Home Economics teacher at Indian Boarding school and Wallace School, January 16, 1964.

9. Show films about many Indian Tribes; use records, songs, etc.[16]
10. Discuss areas of interest such as horses, rodeos, pick-up trucks, pets, etc. in establishing rapport.[17]
11. Take advantage of local Indians as resource people.
12. Discover the degree of acculturation of families as quickly as possible. This will help the teacher establish conflict areas.[18]
13. Visit the parents, if at all possible, to dispel any doubts that are the result of misunderstandings.[19]
14. Introduce areas of conflict slowly.[20]
15. Discuss the facets of the Indian culture that appear to be superior to those of the dominant culture, such as lack of ulcers, anxiety, etc.[21]
16. Reward the advances made by the students in such a manner that will not gain the enmity of his peers.[22]

These are, of course, just a few of the ways that the differences in the cultural backgrounds can be used in an approach to successful acculturation and success in school.

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[16]Interview with Bert Williams, Indian and teacher, January 16, 1964.

[17]Bernardoni, op. cit., p. 3.

[18]Ibid., p. 3.

[19]Ibid., p. 3.

[20]Ibid., p. 4.

[21]Ibid., p. 4.

[22]Sizemore, op. cit., p. 40.

CHAPTER III

ARIZONA INDIANS

More Indians live in Arizona than in any other state in the nation--more than 100,000 of them--members of 14 different tribes. The 19 reservations, see Appendix A, cover over 19,500,000 acres, or 27% of the state's total land area.[1]

Since most of the Indian students encountered in Yuma County School District #27 are Mohave, the greater part of this section will deal with them. However, some of the other tribes will be covered in an abbreviated way.

Languages of Arizona Indians

All languages spoken by members of Arizona Tribes differ radically from English. Furthermore, they vary significantly from each other.

The Apaches, both the White Mountain and San Carlos, and the Navajo speak languages which are closely related to each other but are different from the languages of other Arizona Tribes.

The speech of the Pimas and Papagos is quite similar. Pima and Papago dialects differ from each other no more than

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[1]Arizona Development Board, Meet Arizona's Indians, (Phoenix, Arizona Development Board, 1961) no page number.

varieties of American English.

The language of the Chemehuevis, who live on the Colorado River Indian Reservation, and the Paiutes of the Kaibab Reservation are similar enough to allow members of these two tribes to converse with a high degree of understanding.

The Cocapah, Yuma, Mohave, Maricopa, Yavapai, Hualapai, and Havasupai Tribes employ dialects of the Yuman language.

Two Indian languages are spoken among the Hopis. The principal one is Hopi itself and the other is Tewa. The latter is a Rio Grand Pueblo Language and is used by the people on the First Mesa.

English has come into considerable usage among Arizona Indians, since many depend on off-reservation employment for the greater part of their income.[2]

Facts About Arizona Indians

Mohave Indians

Before the Reservation

Accounts are sketchy about when the Colorado River Indians, the Mohave, first came into the area now occupied by them; but as far back as 1540[3] we find that the Spanish invaders

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[2]Ibid., no page number.

[3]Dama Langley, "Land of Beginning Again," Arizona Highways, #20(June 1954), pp. 26-29.

gave the area in the lower Mohave valley, extending to the Colorado River, a wide berth because of the warlike Mohaves living in that area.

We find that Fray Francisco Graces,[4] the first European to cross the Mohave River, in 1775 and 1776, states that he found 3,000 Mohave and about half that many Chemehuevi. The area he discribes is along the South Gorge of the Colorado River, including the narrow flood plains of the river in Mohave Valley from a little above Fort Mohave southward to the point where the river enters the narrow gorge. Above rise the jagged peaks known as the Needles, located just south of Topock, Arizona. The Mohave have occupied this territory for at least three centuries.

Sometime between 1850 and 1854 the Mohave attacked 1500 United States cavalry soldiers in hand to hand combat. About ten years later they destroyed a wagon train of Texas pioneers of 70 men, women and children. Then early in 1867 they drove the Chemehuevi off Cottonwood Island above Fort Mohave.[5]

There was never a treaty between the Mohave Tribe and the United States Government, but in 1865 informal negotiations were started to set aside reservation land for the Mohave.[6]

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[4]Bureau of American Ethnology, Handbook of American Indians, Bulletin 30, Part 1, p. 242.

[5]G.E. Lindquist, The Red Man in the United States (New York: Geo. H. Doren Co., 1932), 305-307.

[6]Langley, op. cit., pp. 26-29.

Boundries of the Reservation

The Colorado River Indian Reservation was established by an Act of Congress, approved by the President, March 3, 1865 as follows:

> All that part of the public domain in the Territory of Arizona lying west of a direct line from Half-way Bend to Corner Rock on the Colorado River, containing about 75,000 acres of land, shall be set apart for an Indian Reservation for the Indians of said river and its tributaries.[7]

The Colorado River Indian Reservation was established on the recommendation of Colonel Charles D. Poston, Superintendent of Indian Affairs of the Territory of Arizona, who held a council with the Indians at La Paz, see Appendix B, early in 1864. This council was attended by the principal chiefs and leading men of the Yuma, Yavapai, Mohave and Chemehuevi tribes.

Soon after making his report and recommendations concerning this reservation, Colonel Poston was selected as the Delegate to Congress from the newly organized Territory of Arizona, and it was largely due to his efforts that Congress approved the establishment of this reservation in 1865.[8]

During the negotiations in Washington, Colonel Poston said that the reservation should be large enough to support 10,000 Indians, with an irrigation system set up at a cost of

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[7] Constitution, By Laws and Ordinances of the Colorado River Indian Tribes of the Colorado River Reservation Arizona and California (Lawrence, Kansas: Haskel Press, 1947), p. 1.

[8] Ibid., p.1.

$50,000.00 in gold, or twice that amount in currency.[9]

The boundaries of the Colorado River Indian Reservation were subsequently changed from time to time as indicated by the following Executive Orders:

1. Executive Order of November 22, 1873.
2. Executive Order of November 16, 1874.
3. Executive Order of May 15, 1876.
4. Executive Order of November 22, 1915.

Of these, only two really define the Colorado River Indian Reservation as we know it today. Executive Order of May 15, 1876 defined the boundaries as follows:

> Beginning at a point where La Paz Arroyo enters the Colorado River, 4 miles above Ehrenberg; thence easterly with said arroyo to a point south of the crest of La Paz Mountain; thence with said mountain crest in a northerly direction over the Colorado River to the top of Monument Peak, in the State of California; thence southwesterly in a straight line toward the place of beginning to the west bank of the Colorado River; thence down said river west bank to a point opposite the place of beginning; thence to the place of beginning.[10]

In 1876 the boundary of the reservation was re-surveyed and a section line survey was made based on an auxiliary meridian known as the Colorado River Meridian.[11]

The survey of the southern boundary line, made in 1876,

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[9] Ibid., p. 1.

[10] Ibid., p. 2.

[11] Ibid., p. 2.

erroneously located the southern boundary line by accepting an arroyo other than the Arroyo La Paz, and in order to correct this error and to conform such lines to the public system of surveys, Executive Order of November 22, 1915 ordered:

> That such southern boundary line of the Colorado River Indian Reservation shall be on a line commencing at a point on the left bank of the Colorado River marked by an iron post 3 inches in diameter stamped C.R.I.R. on brass cap thereof as established by the United States surveyor in 1912; thence easterly along the line of iron posts established by said surveyor to the corner of township 3 and 4 north, ranges 21 and 22 west, G. & S.R.M.; thence north along the range line to the established corner of sections 13, 18, 19 and 24, township 4 north, ranges 21 and 22 west; thence easterly along the established section lines to the closing corner of sections 18 and 19, township 4 north, range 20 west, recorded by said United States surveyor as located north 6 degrees, 36 minutes east, 66.17 chains from an iron post marked C.R.I.R. on brass cap thereof, established on the highest point of La Paz Mountain.[12]

Irrigation

The land on the reservation that is at present under cultivation is all irrigated land. The land itself would have little value without the Colorado River Indian Irrigation Project that provides irrigation water for the reservation. The right of this project to the water, the life blood of the tribe, is established by the fact that the reservation was set aside for

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[12] Ibid., p. 2.

use by the Indians and was established prior to any excessive demands being made on the water from the Colorado River.[13]

Previous to the construction of any irrigation works on the Colorado River, Indians from time immemorial practiced a method of irrigation dependent upon the overflow on the lands by spring floods. When the overflow failed to come, as it not infrequently did, there was much suffering among the Indians. At such times they attempted to grow some crops by planting small patches near the river or sloughs from which they carried water to irrigate.

In 1860 Congress appropriated $50,000[14] to begin work on the first canal for the reservation. The work of excavating was done wholly with shovals, and about five miles of the canal was completed before the funds were exhausted.

In July of 1868, Congress provided another $50,000 for the completion of the canal and the building of a headgate.[15]

Water was first turned into the canal on July 4, 1870, but owing to faulty design or construction of the headgate and to the unusually high stage of the river, more water came into the canal than it could carry. As a result the banks were washed away for some distance below the agency, and a large section of the reservation was flooded.

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[13] Ibid., p. 3.

[14] Ibid., p. 3.

[15] Ibid., p. 3.

In the years following the big break, much work was done on the irrigation system. Canals were built, tunnels were built and pumping stations were constructed in order to get water for irrigation. Most of the time, however, these projects failed to produce the needed water.

In 1898-99 a pumping plant was installed and was operated until the new pumping plant was completed in 1912. This pumping plant consisted of a 40 h.p. steam engine and a 15 inch centrifugal pump.

In May of 1918 Congress appropriated $50,000 for continuing the securing of water for irrigation of approximately 150,000 acres of land on the reservation. The government conducted surveys and prepared plans and estimates for a complete system to supply water to the reservation. The irrigation system was to be based on a diversion dam at Headgate Rock and to include a desilting basin, Lake Moovalya, main canals, distributary system, protective levee and drainage works.

The construction of Headgate Dam across the Colorado River was authorized and was completed in June of 1941 at a total cost of $4,632,775.[16] The location of the dam is shown on the map in Appendix B.

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[16] Ibid., p. 4.

The Reservation After 1941

By the beginning of World War II, about 10,000 acres of the Colorado River Indian Reservation land had been irrigated, but some of it had reverted to mesquite and cactus. When the War Relocation Department needed a place for 18,000 Japanese-Americans living on the coast, the Bureau of Indian Affairs entered into an agreement with them to use a portion of the Colorado River Indian Reservation.[17] In exchange for the use of the land, the War Relocation Department was to clear, level, irrigate, cultivate and leave the land in good condition. This was work that the Japanese-Americans were familiar with, and they soon had 3,200 acres cleared, and irrigation system built not only for the first 3,200 acres but for another 2,500.[18] The Japanese-Americans were industrious, and some of them wanted to stay after the war; however, they could not be permitted to stay, and the land was turned back to the Colorado River Indian Tribes.

There is no doubt that a reservation of over 100,000 acres, is entirely too much for the Mohave and Chemehuavi to farm themselves. The question in 1945 was what should be done with the extra land? At about the same time the government was trying to

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[17] Langley, op. cit., pp. 26-29.

[18] Ibid., pp. 26-29.

work out a plan of Indian colonizations so that they could relieve the over-populated situations on the other Arizona reservations. A program was set up whereby 75,000 acres, including the Japanese-American cleared land, were to be used for colonists and the rest retained by the Colorado River Tribes.

The first colonists to be moved to this area were the Hopis, who came in 1945. By 1948 there were 20 Hopi families and 6 Navajo families settled on the land. By 1958 there were 101 Navajo families and 25 Hopi families settled on the Colorado River Indian Reservation.[19] These settlers were given a loan of $3,000 per family, with which to buy discarded barracks buildings, left by the War Relocation Department, farm equipment and household goods. Each family was given a 40 acre allotment. Since that time, however, the allotments have been raised to 80 acres.[20]

The Mohave people realized that this colonization program could continue to grow until there would be more colonists living on the land than their own people. The Tribal Council was able to negotiate with the government to halt this program, until such time as a true title to the land could be established. A phrase in the original reservation agreement, which said that the land

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[19]Interview with Roy Track, Director of Realty, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Parker Agency, January 18, 1964.

[20]Ibid.

shall be set apart for Indians of said River and its tributaries, is not clear. It is the feeling among the older members of the tribe that the land belongs only to the Mohave and Chemehuevi tribes. They contend that when Colonel Poston first met with them at La Paz, he called five tribes, the Mohave, Chemehuevi, Yavapai, Hualapai, and Yuma. During the planning stages and finally when the reservation was established, the Mohave and Chemehuevi understood the word "tributaries" to include these five tribes. The other three tribes, Yavapai, Hualapai and Yuma later returned to their original homes and were assigned to reservation lands where they were living, leaving the Colorado River Indian Reservation land to the Mohave and Chemehuevi Tribes.

Tribal Ownership of the Reservation

A bill to establish the ownership of the Colorado River Indian Reservation was passed by the House of Representatives on April 19, 1964. The bill grants ownership of the land to some 1,645 Mohave and Chemehuevi Indians, plus other Indians who hold land under the authority of the tribe or the federal government. The law provides that these other Indians must be adopted by the tribe within two years and renounce membership in any other tribe.[21]

Traditional Dress of Mohave

Although the Mohave current dress is like that of the

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[21]Interview with Pete Homer, Chairman, Colorado River Indian Tribal Council, May 15, 1964.

non-Indian, for centuries the Mohave men and women wore only loin coverings, were barefooted and bareheaded, and covered the upper body only as inclement weather dictated.

The men wore a breechclout held by a belt or cord. This clout formed a short flap in front and a longer one in back. This was made of broad willow bark strips or of the inner bark of the cottonwood, in a checkered weave.

The costume of the Mohave women was more elaborate, especially of the young women. The old women put aside the vanities of the world, abandoned the ornamentations of youth, and dressed just like the men. The general effect, however, was unfortunate since as the Mohave women get old, they get fat. One man said that the women always reminded him of nutmeg-melons.

The dress of the young Mohave women was a kind of kilt made with strips of bark, about two inches wide, dyed and stained different colors, and fastened to a narrow buckskin waist belt. This kilt was composed of two aprons. A short under-apron was worn by women at all times beneath the front apron.[22]

Mohave Tattooing and Face Painting

These Indians, like most primitive peoples, were fond of personal adornment. The favorite methods of self-embellishment

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[22]Leslie Spier, "Mohave Culture Items," Museum of Northern Arizona, Bulletin 28, Northern Arizona Society of Science and Arts, Inc., (Flagstaff, 1955) p. 7.

were tattooing and painting. Men and women had marks tattooed on the chin and usually on the forehead as well. Both sexes, in addition, painted striking deisgns on their faces, hair and bodies.[23]

Today, face-painting and tatooing are rapidly disappearing. The Indian Service has consistently opposed and discouraged both practices. The young people of the tribe, however, have a practice of tattooing small marks on their hands and arms.

Practically all of the older surviving Mohave have tattoo marks, whereas relatively few of the young people are tattooed in the traditional way. Facial painting, once so common and popular, is rarely seen even at festive occasions. Many of the older members of the tribe even today keep a supply of pigment which is to be strewn over their bodies at their cremation.

The Mohave believed that unless they were tattooed they would be refused entrance to the land of the dead and would be forced to "go down a rat-hole."[24]

Religion and Mythology

The Mohave rejected all forms of the Christian religion, in the main, because it did not agree with his belief in two gods, Matavilya and Mestamho, who appeared on the earth after the great flood. They fixed the sun in its place and the river

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[23]Edith S. Taylor and W.J. Wallace, "Mohave Tattooing and Face Painting," Southwest Museaum Leaflets, No. 20, (Southwest Museum of Los Angeles, 1947) pp. 1-12.

[24]Interview with Agnes Savilla, Member and Officer of the Colorado River Indian Tribal Council, February 25, 1964.

in its bed, then made the earth ready for the people. The people then arose out of the earth.

Matavilya and Mastamho divided the people into tribes and assigned them territories to be occupied. The Mohave went the wrong way, but since they appeared to be special people, they were allowed to stay in the sacred place near the three mountains. These mountains are the Needles.

Matavilya went to live where the sun goes down; it is his job to take care of the sun. Mastamho went to the Grand Canyon, the other side of the earth, to take care of the river.

Padre Graces, a Franciscan father, went among the Mohave to tell of Christianity. He told them that their gods were of superstition and fear and that Jesus was the only God. They rejected him and his God.[25]

Mohave Cremation

When a Mohave dies, the corpse is not left alone. All the relatives gather, and there is much weeping, singing, and dancing before the body is cremated. This is not to simulate joy, but it is to give the spirit a good send-off into the next world. The ceremony lasts for three days and nights. The songs include those the deceased sang and liked to hear sung.

During this time, a hole approximately five feet deep is

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[25]Ibid.

dug and is made wide enough so that it may be lined with wood. The corpse is placed inside, face down, with the head toward the south. Wood, personal belongings, and gifts, brought by relatives and friends, are then placed on the corpse. Some gifts are purchased especially for the occasion. The fire is applied to the pyre, and some member of the family remains until all is consumed. As the burning progresses, the ashes and debris fall into the hole, and at last it is filled with earth and leveled.

After a cremation, relatives do not eat salt for four days. They bathe morning and evening in cold water and smoke themselves with wood smoke of the mesquite. This is done so that the spirit of the dead will not come back and bother them.

Until recent times, the Mohave had a funeral ceremony in the fall of each year at which time they mourned the death of all who had died during the past year.[26]

Arts and Crafts

The Mohave are deficient in art, except for the beadwork which some of the older women still practice. They do, however, make some crude bowls, baskets and dippers. Some of the older members of the tribe say that they can remember having toy dolls made of clay, having natural hair on the heads, necklaces of

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[26]Pete Homer, op. cit.

beads, and painted faces.

Tribal Government

The governing body of the Colorado River Indian Tribes is the Tribal Council. This council is made up of nine members, elected by secret ballot by members of the tribe. The council consists of a chairman and a vice-chairman. There is also a secretary-treasurer who may or may not be an elected member of the council. The members are paid for attending the meetings, and the officers are paid a salary. The duty of this council is to manage the affairs of the reservation and the tribe.

The Tribal Council has its own law enfourcement body and tribal court. These bodies have jurisdiction over the machinery of law enforcement on the reservation.[27]

Education

Education, according to Pete Homer, Chairman of the Colorado River Indian Tribes, is a never ending process. Educated native leadership is the crying need of all Indian people today. Education is the Indian's only salvation if he is to take his rightful place along side the white man. The sooner the Indian becomes familiar with the non-Indian language and his way of life, through the educational process, the sooner his reservation status will be terminated. Lawyers, doctors, administrators and teachers

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[27]By-Laws, op. cit., p. 11.

are needed by all Indian people.

To further the education of the Mohave and Chemehuevi students, a sum of $8,000 has been set aside by the Tribal Council as a college scholarship fund. It is the hope of the Tribe that many of its young people will take advantage of this program.

Other Arizona Tribes

Navajo

The Navajos live on the largest reservation in the United States. It is a high plateau running up to 7,000 feet in northeast Arizona. See map, Appendix A. It is believed that they came down from the north into the southwest five or six hundred years ago. Their native home is called a hogan--a structure consisting of a single room with a dome-shaped roof. It is built of logs and mud and is hexagonal in shape.

The Navajos are rapidly increasing in numbers--there are now over 50,000 in Arizona--and are quickly adopting the non-Indian way of life. They are semi-nomadic, moving with their sheep and goats from winter to summer homes and doing some farming.

The Navajos are famous as weavers and silversmiths. The possession and display of jewelry is a significant measure of the individual's wealth; consequently a large amount of hard goods may hang on the satin skirts and velvet blouses of the

women or on the shirts and levis of the men.[28]

Hopi

The Hopi Reservation, see map, Appendix A, is like a large inlay on the Navajo Reservation. The Hopi live in nine villages on three mesas. They first became known to the white man in 1540. They are the only true pueblo group in Arizona. The household centers around the mother and is the pivot of village and social life. The Hopi seek bountiful crops through intricate ceremonies. They still carry on ceremonies phrased in terms of specific purposes such as rain-getting, fertility and healing.

The Hopi are well known for their craft work particularly their carved and colorful painted wooden Kachina dolls. They are known for their fine pottery, their coiled and wicker basketry and, in recent years, for their overlay silver jewelry.

The population of the Hopis in Arizona is about 5,300.[29]

Apache

There are about 9,000 Apaches in Arizona. Living on the San Carlos and White Mountain Reservations, see map, Appendix A, the Apache are known as the Indian cattlemen. They were considered the most warlike tribe in the southwest. They live in dwellings known as wikiups, constructed of poles set in the ground

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[28]Arizona Development Board, op. cit., no page number.

[29]Ibid., no page number.

in circular formation drawn together at the top, then thatched with bear grass and covered with skins.[30]

Pima

The river people number nearly 7,500 and are mostly farmers. Adobe houses predominate as shelters. Basketry is the chief art, and the Pima basket is among the very finest found in Indian crafts. The Maricopas are joined with the Pimas on two reservations. See map, Appendix A. These people, the Maricopas, were driven from their original homes around Poston, Arizona by the Mohave. [31]

The Colorado River Tribes

This group of Indians is made up of six different tribes: Havasupai, Haulapai, Yuma, Cocopah, Chemehuevi, and the Mohave, which have already been covered in the preceeding section. These people do not live in their original homes, and all have been much changed by their contact with non-Indian culture. They live along, or near, the Colorado River. See map in Appendix A for location of their reservations. The Havasupais live in great isolation in Cataract Canyon, which is an arm of the Grand Canyon. [32]

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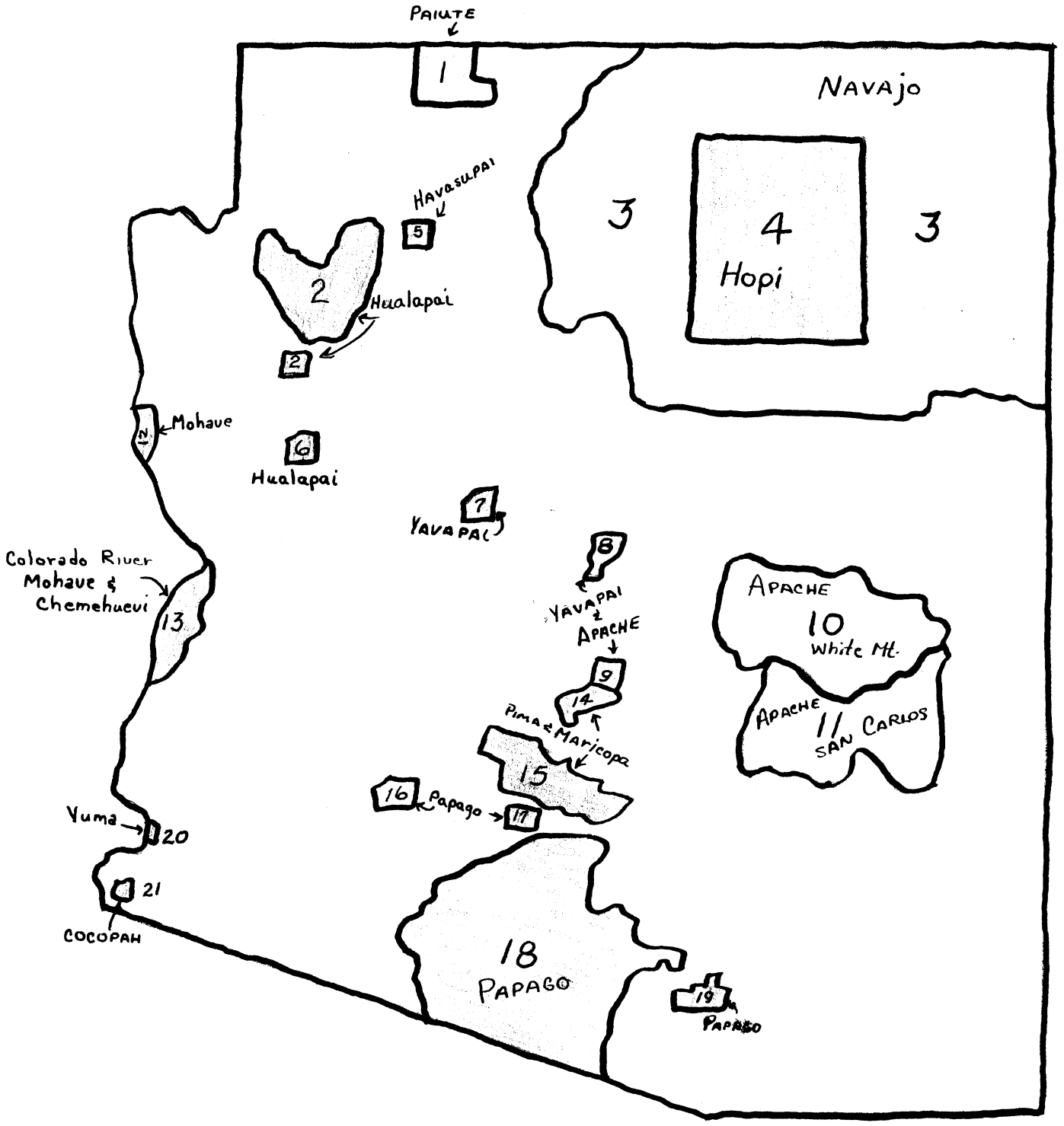
[30] Ibid., no page number.

[31] Ibid., no page number.

[32] Ibid., no page number.

APPENDIX A

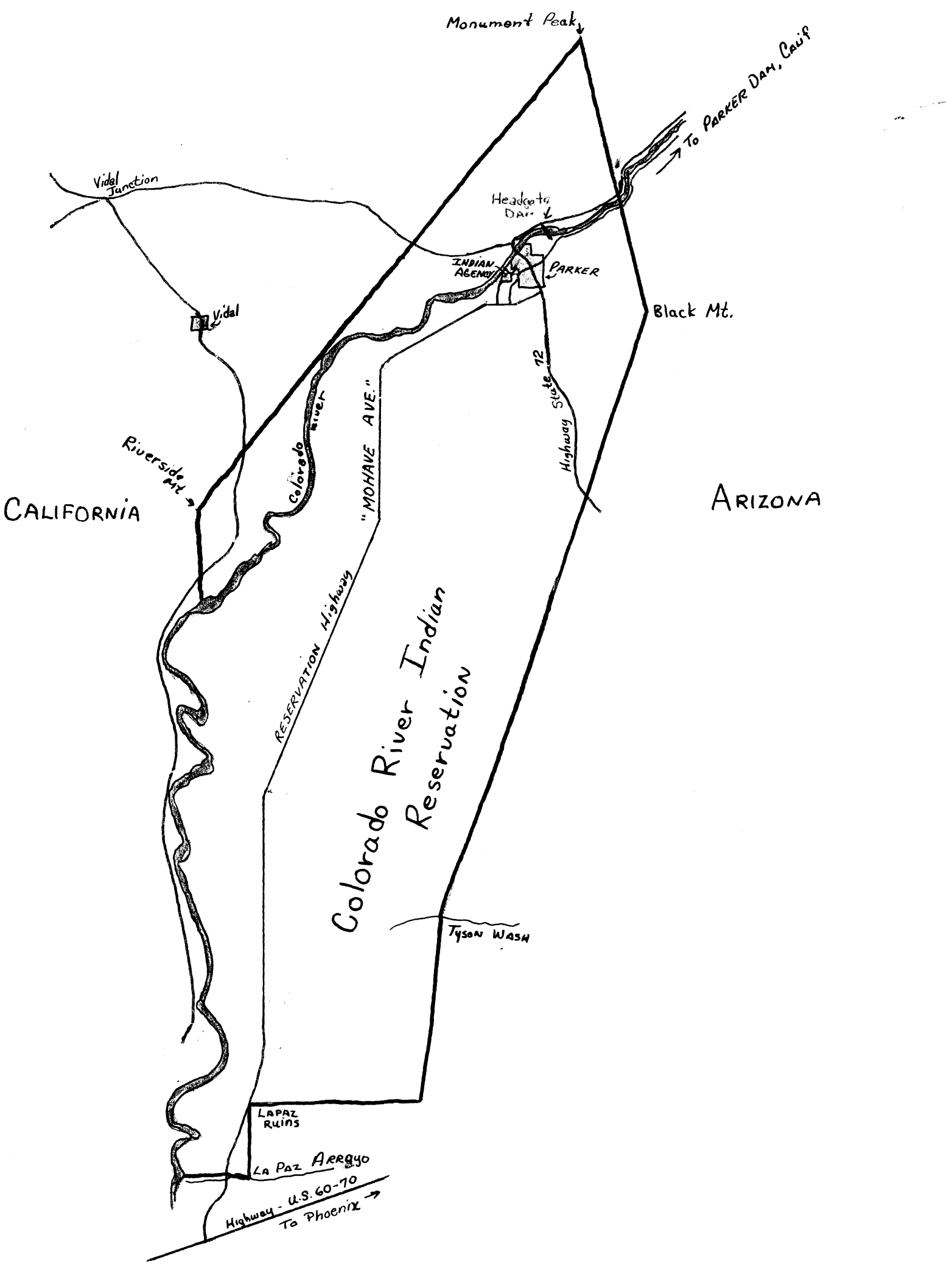
MAP OF ARIZONA INDIAN RESERVATIONS



ARIZONA INDIAN RESERVATIONS

APPENDIX B

MAP OF COLORADO RIVER INDIAN RESERVATION


Monument Peak
To PARKER DAM, Calif
Vidal Junction
Headgate Dam
INDIAN AGENCY
PARKER
Black Mt.
Vidal
Colorado River
"MOHAVE AVE."
Highway State 72
Riverside Mt.
CALIFORNIA
ARIZONA
RESERVATION Highway
Colorado River Indian Reservation
TYSON WASH
LAPAZ RUINS
LA PAZ ARROYO
Highway - U.S. 60-70
To Phoenix

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